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**THE KEYSTONE**

# Defender

4 No. 10

STATE COUNCIL OF CIVIL DEFENSE, HARRISBURG, PA.

DECEMBER, 1955

## Warren County Editor Praises Civil Defense

A HALF MILLION DOLLAR fire swept the United Refining Company at Seneca, Pa., Sunday, October 30, 1955. The United Refining Company statement describes the disaster:

"At 9:30 a. m. Sunday, an explosion of undetermined origin wrecked a chilling plant and a pump house at the Seneca plant of the United Refining Company. The Seneca plant is the bright stock lubricating oil operation located approximately one mile from the main United plant. Fire resulting from the explosion quickly destroyed a building containing centrifuge machines and one of the nearby beauxite kilns collapsed from the heat.

"Other damage was confined to another pump house, refrigeration equipment, four chilling tanks, a plant laboratory and another small plant office building. The nearby filter house was not damaged.

"The fire was brought under control within two hours and was completely out by 1 o'clock thanks to prompt work of the Warren Fire Department plus volunteer fire departments from the nearby communities of Clarendon, Pleasant Township, Youngsville and Russell with North Warren, Starbrick, and Glade township fire trucks standing by at Warren stations.

"Civil Defense workers, local and state police and Salvation Army workers responded and assisted during the fire.

"Preliminary estimates are that the loss will be approximately \$500,000. Company officials state that rebuilding of the plant will proceed immediately.

"United employees on duty at the Seneca plant were quickly reinforced by employees from the main plant and

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## MEETING DISASTER Public Health and Hurricane Diane

By ARTHUR B. WELSH, M. D.

*Medical Coordinator for Civil Defense  
Department of Health  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania*

IT STARTED OUT as another drenching downpour of rain, the lashing aftermath of a tropical hurricane—this one named Diane. That was noon of Thursday, August 18, 1955.

But before it was over (and its consequences still are being felt and will be for months to come) it had become the most devastating flood in United States history, an ugly, awe-inspiring whim of Nature that would leave large areas of six northeastern states ravaged, property damage in excess of \$1,500,000,000, hundreds dead and missing and immeasurable human misery and suffering.

Pennsylvania was one of the states hardest hit, but it is to the credit of its citizens, official and non-official, who fought this disaster that its losses were not greater.

There are many stories to be told about the Great Flood of 1955, but this will tell of one vital part of that story—the safeguarding of public health during the emergency.

In the busy cities, the little coal towns, and on the peaceful farms of northeastern Pennsylvania men went home from work that Thursday evening little dreaming of what, within hours, they would have to experience.

Even as they and their wives and children watched the steady, gust-driven torrents of rain outside, and listened to the voices from loudspeakers warning of record rainfalls to come, Disaster was being born. Tiny rivulets from the hillsides joined gushing creeks already pouring their liquid

tons into bank-full, overburdened rivers.

Friday morning's dawn revealed the enormity of the catastrophe, and frantic calls for help went out. Rivers had risen in their wrath and their torrents had swept over homes and buildings like a watery avalanche. In Harrisburg the tempo mounted as lights on telephone switchboards in the Capitol glowed constantly.

Operating in close liaison with the office of the State Secretary of Health, Dr. Berwyn F. Mattison, the Office of Medical Civil Defense swung into action. Central offices of bureaus and divisions of the Department of Health were alerted to stand by for instructions. Coordinated relief had commenced.

All that Friday night (and for nights to come) office lights would glare in Capitol offices as men and women, trained for disaster action, worked to bring order out of chaos. It was decided, at a meeting of Department heads in Dr. Mattison's office, to establish emergency on-the-spot health headquarters at Easton, with Dr. Franklin Reeder, Medical Director of Region VII, as Director. This was accomplished by 8:30 Friday evening. Assisting him were Dr. Mark V. Ziegler, Medical Director of Region VI, and a corps of sanitary engineers, public health nurses, and public health educators.

Thirty hours of drumming rain had piled a record eight to ten inches of rainfall on land still wet from Hurricane Connie. Saving human lives became the first consideration, and hundreds were snatched from watery graves by boats, helicopters, and other

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## Western Pennsylvania Surprise Communications Alert

ROSS I. WEBB, Area Director of Western Pennsylvania, reported that the Surprise Communications Alert held on October 25, 1955, was of great value to all personnel participating on the local, county and area levels.

His report follows:

The purpose of the test was to further test county and local telephone fan-out plans, emergency mobilization and operational plans, and to provide the local and county staffs practice in solving county and local problems.

As the Communications section of Civil Defense is one of the important divisions, Mr. Webb called for such an alert for the following reasons:

1. To test the present Communications System.
2. To train communications personnel.
3. To coordinate all services of civil defense.
4. To give top staff members some idea of the problem faced in natural disasters or enemy action; and to familiarize control center staffs with the general routine procedures of a control center operation.

As the Bell-and-Light system was not utilized in the test, amateur radio, telephone and messenger services were tested to the utmost. The result was that the load on the telephone operators was tremendous and the amateur radio men found the various channels jammed with calls. Some counties forgot to utilize their amateur radio men to the fullest extent.

Most county directors planned problems for county and local staffs. In addition, the Area Civil Defense staff provided problems. These included: an Atomic bomb exploded in Presque Isle Bay and the northern part of the City of Erie was subjected to severe

damage; a 2X atomic bomb exploded in the vicinity of Waterford, 15 miles south of Erie; a dam was broken by an atomic explosion and as a result a city was completely destroyed and other communities were flooded with radioactive water. Arrangements had to be made by other counties to accept and shelter thousands from the devastated areas. Forest fires were raging from the dropping of incendiary bombs.

One County Director reported that approximately 1000 people had been alerted and were available at their posts. Welfare centers were opened and staffed. Auxiliary police reported at headquarters; all fire companies were alerted and manned. Twenty doctors were standing by.

Other counties reported that their telephone fan-out system broke down and would have to be revised. Excellent cooperation was received from the fire companies and their two-way radios. County Welfare staffs found that it was impossible to work in the same room with other divisions.

County Transportation staffs realized that they play a very important part and if they do not know before disaster strikes the number and type of equipment they have to work with and do not have competent personnel on their staff, nothing is going to move. They, too, require a room to themselves with all the local and county road and railroad maps available.

That loyal group of volunteers, the amateur radio men, did a remarkable piece of work during the alert.

As stated by Mr. Craig Williamson, Administrative Assistant, State Council of Civil Defense, who observed the test from the Western Area Control Center, "Outstanding in this test was the number of busy men and women (70) who took time from their work to drive many miles, some over a hundred miles, to report at the Area Control Center to participate in the alert."

It was a successful exercise, Webb reported, in that it brought to the attention of the County and Local Directors and their staffs that there was work to be done in improving emergency mobilization and operational plans.

### OFFICE ADMINISTRATION

Certainly no office can operate properly without readily-available and intelligently-filed official documents. All civil defense directors need, among other publications: (a) copies of State C. D. Acts; and (b) State Information Circulars. The State Council office fills promptly official requests for these documents.

## Pennsylvania Guardsmen and the Flood

ALTHOUGH NEARLY 2,000 Guardsmen were sent to flood-stricken areas following the August disaster, there was no declaration of martial law.

Major General A. J. Drexel Biddle, Jr., described the operation as "the invention of an entirely new system; a completely new policy in dealing with such emergencies."

State agencies, including representation from Departments of Health, Welfare, Highways, Public Assistance, Civil Defense and Pennsylvania State Police in addition to Red Cross representation, operated at six command posts. These command posts were connected to the headquarters post at Harrisburg by a two-way radio network and teletypewriter system. There was also close coordination with local municipal officials at these command posts.

Each incident that arose in the flood areas was taken care of by the local command post if at all possible. Additional help was requested when necessary.

The Commonwealth's Civilian Soldiers gave support to stricken communities by helping to restore communications, serving as auxiliary police, directing traffic and rendering assistance in any way so directed. Cots and blankets, typhoid serum, water purification tablets, medicines and medical supplies, helicopter and other aircraft were included in the help rendered. Water purification units, water pumps, and Bailey bridges were also sent in by the Pennsylvania National Guard.

The first call for aid was reported to the Adjutant General about 5 P. M., August 18th. The call came from Tamaqua, and Batteries A and C, 337th AAA Gun Battalion, were mobilized. This was followed by the mobilization of other units which were sent to Scranton, Wilkes-Barre, Stroudsburg and East Stroudsburg, Upper Black Eddy, Yardley, and Easton. Members of Company G, 109th Infantry Regiment, were ordered to their home station for service and nine of these Guardsmen discovered upon arrival that they had lost all of their possessions.

Major General Biddle said of the military personnel sent to disaster areas, "The people of the Commonwealth may well be proud of the efficient and swift service rendered by their citizen soldiers during this unprecedented emergency. The dedi-

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### COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA STATE COUNCIL OF CIVIL DEFENSE

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\* \* \*  
DR. RICHARD GERSTELL, *Director*

Free subscriptions to this publication may be obtained by contacting your local civil defense director. Local civil defense directors write to: State Council of Civil Defense, Quakertown, Penna.



# MEN AND MACHINES WORK TO CLEAN UP FLOOD DEBRIS



*Along the "river road" south of Canadensis, Monroe County. Brodhead Creek destroyed all roads, cottages and other man-made improvements along its course unless on high ground. Before any channel work could begin, highways had to be cleared of debris—then Dept. of Forests and Waters went to work to prevent a recurrence of destruction.*



*Imagine these as your household furnishings! This scene was lower Main Street, Stroudsburg. Never before had Brodhead Creek as much as wetted this pavement. Dr. Gerstell, State C. D. director, called it the answer to all who ask (of any type of disaster) "Can it happen here?"*

Photos courtesy Van D. Yetter, Jr., Marshalls Creek, Penna.

## Report of Barrett Twp. Monroe County

By C. MARSHALL REESE

IT WAS APPARENT at approximately 6:30 P. M., Thursday, August 18th, that an unusual situation was developing, therefore, we mobilized our Control Center and alerted Civil Defense police. The station was operating by 7:15 P. M. and our first distress call was received at 7:30 P. M. The Center was manned on a 24-hour basis for the next week and an auxiliary center was established at the Barrett School and manned on a 24-hour basis also.

Both centers were then manned from 6:00 A. M. to 12:00 midnight for the duration of the emergency.

Mobile radio units were immediately placed in service and directed from the Control Center and the fire station. These units were directly responsible for the saving of numerous lives since they provided a constant source of on-the-spot information.

This report was selected from many flood reports because it is a careful piece of work and emanates from one of the hardest-hit communities. There is much contained herein for careful reading by all civil defense directors.

—Editor, KEYSTONE DEFENDER

Our first concern starting at approximately 7:30 P. M., Thursday, August 18th, was the rescue of stranded and marooned residents of Canadensis, Mountainhome and Cresco. Numerous rescues were effected, however, the velocity of the water was so great that many could not be reached. Civil Defense mobile radio units were instrumental in saving many lives and permitted dispatching trucks quickly where needed.

At daylight the next morning, Friday, August 19th, a large force was dispatched to remove those marooned at the height of the flood and an immediate search was instituted for the missing. This search was continued for two weeks until all area missing were recovered. Four seriously injured were found the first morning and eight bodies recovered during the next two weeks.

Some bodies were removed by jeep but most had to be carried to the nearest cleared area and then were flown out by helicopter. (Note: furnished by U. S. Army.)

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## ATOM BLINDNESS

COL. VICTOR A. BYRNES of the Air Force Surgeon General's Office states that the night-time flash of an Atom bomb at ten to twelve miles distant can actually boil up the tissues inside the eye, exploding the seeing part.

He said that even a blink is not fast enough to prevent the eye damage and emphasized that he was speaking of an Atom bomb as well as the so-called Hydrogen bomb.

Speaking to the Association of Military Surgeons, he said further:

"At 42 miles away, the spectator of an A-bomb flash, if looking directly at the fireball without protection, might lose reading vision. In either injury—the burn from the distant flash or the 'explosion' closer up—the victim feels no pain." This is because there are no nerve endings in the part of the eye that is injured, it was explained. Most victims, particularly those at the greater distances, wouldn't even know that their eyes were hurt, but would develop small blind spots in little used spaces of their vision field. The distances at which these eye burns may occur, the report pointed out, are much greater than those for any other harmful effect of nuclear weapons. The eye hazards of atomic fireballs are much greater at night, Col. Byrnes told the convention delegates, because the eye, in darkness, is open to more than 50 times as much light than in narrowed-pupil daytime vision.

## CENTRAL AREA TEST

AN ESTIMATED 120 residents of Shiremanstown (Cumberland County) were evacuated to nearby Lemoyne on Sunday, October 23rd. Purpose: to avoid a simulated tornado.

The citizens were fed, "casualties" treated at Lemoyne mass care centers. About 225 civil defense volunteers participated in the test, it was announced. Disappointment was expressed by C. D. officials who had expected the participation of about 700 citizens.

## PENNA. GUARDSMEN

*(Continued from page 2)*

cated spirit and efficiency which marked the performance of the Pennsylvania National Guard units reflects handsomely upon the unit training received under the National Guard system."

Many civil defense directors of the stricken areas expressed gratitude for the work of the guardsmen during the emergency.

## Pocono-Lehigh Federation

RECENTLY a four-county Civil Defense organization known as the Pocono-Lehigh Federation was organized by the Eastern Area Director, State Council of Civil Defense. Chairman of this group which includes Lehigh, Northampton, Carbon and Monroe Counties is Norman Flores of Allentown.

Announced objectives were "to assemble and exchange statistics and Civil Defense information within the Federation, to insure closer cooperation and coordination within the organization, and to promote the general Civil Defense program."

This is the second Federation of this type organized in the Eastern Area, the first, the Delaware Valley Civil Defense Federation, having been organized about a year ago. The Delaware Valley Federation considers problems incident to Philadelphia, Bucks, Chester, Delaware and Montgomery Counties, in addition to Counties of New Jersey and Delaware.

Organization of these Federations is such that evacuation problems of principle targets may be intelligently discussed by all directors concerned by such planned evacuations either as target or cushion-area directors.

## INCOME TAX NEWS!

TO MANY FAITHFUL civil defense volunteers who spend personal funds in pursuit of their official duties and do not receive reimbursement:

"It is the opinion of this office (Office of Commissioner of Internal Revenue) that the actual unreimbursed expenses incurred by civil defense volunteers in the performance of their volunteer duties, such as traveling expenses to watch atomic bomb tests, the expenses of attending state meetings of civil defense volunteers or other expenses directly connected with and solely attributable to the rendition of such volunteer services, constitute contributions or gifts within the meaning of section 170 of the Code of 1954 and are deductible in the manner and to the extent provided."

## WHO KEEPS THE WATCH?

JUST WHAT KIND of people are these in the Ground Observer Corps? Let me tell you what sort of people they are.

Governor Leader of Pennsylvania has a man in his State who served on dog-watch shift from midnight to six o'clock in the morning—7 days a week—for 7½ months without a break. This man was a disabled miner—suffering considerable discomfort—yet he dedicated himself to this tedious labor in behalf of his country.

Governor Knight of California has a grandmother out in his State who found time—World War II and now—to give us some 12,000 hours of her life in a filter center, plotting and tracking planes, to be sure that no hostile aircraft would penetrate our country—or that part at least which she felt responsible for.

Governor Joe Foss of South Dakota, himself a World War II combat giant with alumni status in Air Defense, has a Priest in his State who has found time to run his Parish—to lead a boy scout troop into Ground Observer duty—and who risks his own private plane to search the countryside whenever there are reports of downed aircraft.

Out in my old home "buckeye" State, Governor Lausche has a Ground Observer who spotted a plane overhead in a storm which he thought was lost. His call provided a geographic fix making it possible for radar to pick him up—and guide the aircraft to safe landing—saving one plane, one Marine Corps pilot, and this Marine pilot happened to be a native of Ohio, too.

Governor Williams of Michigan has five Ground Observer Posts inside prisons in his State. In one of them—376 convicts have kept an unbroken watch since July, 1952, which shows that even men who have lost their freedom temporarily—are convinced it is worth making an effort to make freedom secure.

I could go on citing dozens of similar examples all over the country.

—GENERAL BENJAMIN W. CHIDLAW.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

A feature of the January, 1956 KEYSTONE DEFENDER will be an article "The Red Cross and Civil Defense."

Contributions to this publication, including photographs, are welcomed always. Subscribers, please forward promptly notices of change of address. Failure to do so may result in cancellation.

Address all communications to

THE KEYSTONE DEFENDER

STATE COUNCIL OF CIVIL DEFENSE, QUAKERTOWN, PENNA.

In the November issue Mr. Edwin Robb, 522 E. Ridley Circle, Morton, Pa., was meant to be notated as director of Ridley Township. Mr. Thomas J. Viguers is Director of Morton, Pa.



# AN UNDERSTANDING OF "H" BOMBS

(Excerpts of great interest to civil defense directors from a speech made at New York City, Nov. 17, 1955, by Thomas E. Murray, Commissioner, United States Atomic Energy Commission.)

## A SUMMARY

THE PUBLIC HAS failed to grasp the significance of the power and effects of the hydrogen bomb. The creation of an informed public has not been adequately furthered by public policies.

Much more remains to be understood and realized. When we speak of all-out nuclear warfare, we must realize that there is a limit to the number of large thermonuclear explosions that the human race can withstand without harmful bodily effects.

To help bring about the necessary worldwide understanding of this new concept of power I propose that we convene a meeting at the "Atomic Summit"—at Eniwetok. To this meeting should come thousands—representatives of all the nations of the world. What they would see at Eniwetok would leave no doubt in their minds with regard to the meaning of disaster, as disaster is possible in this Nuclear Age. An experience of this fundamental fact of power would by itself be most salutary in the cause of peace.

### EXCERPTS

Over our age there still hangs the fateful unresolved dilemma: will it be war or peace? The process of trying to make peace goes on—precariously—perilously. But all along the lengthy and tortuous path to peace nations will constantly meet the temptation to war. It would be idle to pretend that this temptation has already been resisted, once for all.

The United States has done one important thing to deter our enemies from yielding to this temptation. We have built up an arsenal of atomic weapons, to which we have added hydrogen-thermonuclear-weapons. There was no prudent alternative to this course of action. The policy was necessary for our own security and that of the free world.

However, our quest for security has led us to a strange end. Presently we are no longer secure about the one thing that always in the past was secure. Amid wars, pestilences, and famines mankind has always been assured of one thing—that there would be a mankind living here on earth, until the day on which man's temporal history would be terminated by an act

of Almighty God. We no longer have this elementary security. Man now has the power to put an end to his own history. In its effort to protect the freedom of the world America has invented nuclear weapons capable of destroying all human life. The avoidance of one danger has thrust us into a more radical danger.

In World War II the power of a bomb was its explosive force, the force of a blast, accompanied by heat and followed by fire. The atomic bomb, of the kind unfortunately dropped on Hiroshima, was indeed a bigger bomb, thousands of times bigger than the biggest high explosive bomb; it was a "block-buster," this was a "city buster."

Then came the thermonuclear explosion of November 1, 1952. This device taught us, not only that we had a new weapon, but that we had a different kind of weapon. We had unleashed a different kind of power.

The thermonuclear bomb crosses the threshold into a separate category of power by reason of the sheer force and reach of its blast. Its explosion is so tremendous that it must be reckoned as a different kind of explosion. But this is not the more important difference. The thermonuclear bomb not only blasts and burns more acreage, more buildings, more people; it also releases dangerous radioactive fission products into the atmosphere. True, the "A" bomb also releases these fission products, but on a small scale. However, the atmospheric contamination that results from large thermonuclear explosions is serious. In fact, it is so serious that it could be catastrophic. A sufficiently large number of such explosions would render the earth uninhabitable to man. This is plain fact.

This is why I say that large thermonuclear weapons represent an entirely new kind of power. Their potential destructiveness is so different from the destructiveness of "A" bombs that these new weapons do not belong in the same category—not by any stretch of the imagination.

Let me be more specific. One of the products released by any nuclear explosion is a substance that is called radioactive strontium. Unlike ordinary

strontium, this strontium gives off beta radiation which is one of the three kinds of radiation emitted by radium and its decay products. Prior to the atomic age there was no radioactive strontium in the atmosphere or the soil.

Of the radioactive strontium released in an explosion of a large thermonuclear weapon some falls to earth rather quickly over thousands of square miles and some is shot up into the stratosphere. From thence it settles down, diffusing throughout the whole envelope of atmosphere that surrounds the earth. Rainfall speeds its descent but it comes down slowly; only a fraction of it is deposited on the earth during the course of a year. Hence, the contamination continues to be deposited on the earth for years after the blast of the explosion has died away.

From the earth's soil radioactive strontium passes into food and then into the human body where it is absorbed into the bone structure. Here its beta rays, if intense enough, can cause bone tumors. We know that there is a limit to the amount of this strontium that the human body can absorb without harmful effects. Beyond that limit danger lies, and even death. The problem has been to fix the limit.

It is still an unsolved problem. In the course of a year the estimates have changed almost wildly. A year ago the public was informed that the radiostrontium presently in the soil would have to increase a million times over before increased frequency of bone tumors from this cause could be recognized. Recent statements have revised that figure drastically and significantly downward from one million to ten thousand. Whatever figure is agreed upon it will be lowered some—perhaps only a little—as the radiostrontium already in the atmosphere slowly settles to earth.

In any event, there is a limit to the tolerable amount of radiostrontium that can be deposited in the soil. Consequently, there is a limit to the number of large thermonuclear explosions that the human race can withstand without harmful bodily effects. This is

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## WARREN EDITOR

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off-duty refinery personnel soon arrived at the scene. Injuries were minor burns suffered by the firemen."

As a result of Civil Defense participation the Warren Times-Mirror had an editorial that we have copied with their kind permission because we think it worthwhile for all interested in Civil Defense. The editorial follows:

"New records for brevity are being established throughout the world. Travel time from the West Coast has been cut from days to hours, and now it would seem that some sort of record for both controlling and extinguishing dangerous fires has been established right here at home.

"With no loss of life in the Seneca refinery fire on Sunday morning, it is possible to look upon the cross-section of events and state, with no reservations, that the fire provided an opportunity to show exactly what cooperation can accomplish. First, the Mutual Aid arrangement whereby nine fire trucks from five county towns joined forces with Warren's own fire department within a matter of minutes. Second, and just as important, the immediate response of both county and borough Civil Defense units. And it wasn't just a matter of accumulating a large number of people at the scene of the bad fire—each and every man knew what to do and how to do it. It was a grand and glorious demonstration of the effectiveness of Mutual Aid and Civil Defense. As a result, what might have been a stubborn and uncontrollable holocaust for days was under control and out in a matter of hours.

"Not so some 29 years ago! Word swept the borough that memorable day of July 19, 1926, that the Warren Refinery at Venturatown was ablaze! Over roads quite different from our highways of today came two pumpers from Jamestown to help the already tired and discouraged Warren firemen. The problem of extinguishing the fire was too much to achieve, it was a matter of letting it burn out, jumping from gigantic tank to tank over a period of several days. There were no county departments in those days, no Civil Defense, no Mutual Aid because there were no departments to form into Mutual Aid.

"Sunday's refinery fire, with its terrible loss, was never-the-less a fine example of what co-operation can accomplish. It proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that an atomic attack from the skies is not the only reason for

Mutual Aid and Civil Defense. Most assuredly we are about to enter upon a new era in cooperation in Warren county because Sunday's fire has proved to us that Mutual Aid and Civil Defense are here to stay! They have earned our undying respect, our whole-hearted support and participation!"

## P. T. A. State Convention

MRS. HELEN A. WALTER, Western Area Coordinator of Emergency Welfare Services, State Council of Civil Defense, spoke to the 944 PTA delegates attending the 47th Annual State Convention of the Pennsylvania Congress of Parents and Teachers on Monday, October 31, at the Inn, Buck Hill Falls, Pa.

Mrs. Walter emphasized that the home is the basic unit of the community—and the basic unit on which defense of the home front must be built. As one of the objects of the P. T. A. is "To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, church and community," it is important that every PTA member act at once to educate their family in self-protection against modern weapons and to make their homes and schools as safe as possible against the dangers of disaster. The delegates were urged to participate in their local civil defense organization and avail themselves of the civil defense training program offered to prepare them to meet emergencies as they arise.

Praise was given to those PTA units who have recognized the fact that they must keep abreast of defense plans as developed and interpret to the general public the problems of the program and the responsibility of individuals to take places on the county and local civil defense teams. Other units were urged to accept the responsibility to their children and develop the civil defense plan of work outlined by their State Chairman of Civil Defense.

Mrs. Walter is the State Secretary and State Chairman of Civil Defense of the Pennsylvania Congress of Parents and Teachers, which has a membership of 453,468. The national membership of the P. T. A. is approximately ten million.

## "H" BOMBS

(Continued from page 5)

a crucial point to remember when there is talk of an all-out-nuclear war.

There is another aspect to the insidious destructiveness of thermonuclear weapons. The radioactive products they release have an effect on human genetics. The sheer fact of this ef-

## Welcome, New Directors!

### WESTERN AREA:

ANDREW H. MORGAN, 37 Water St., Smithfield, Pa.; Rev. A. E. Allerton, 215 E. Pike St., Houston, Pa.; Mathew L. Furjanic, Borough Bldg., Second St. and Kennaur Ave., Rankin, Pa.; Matthew K. McKee, Box 325, R. D. #3, Finleyville, Pa.; George Jacobs, 124 Versailles Ave., E. Pittsburgh, Pa.; Charles Meani, Imperial, Pa.; Joseph Neugebauer, R. D. #1, Aliquippa, Pa.; Harold Pierce, R. D. #3, Ford City, Pa.; Stanley Right, Jr., R. D. #3, Cambridge Springs, Pa.

### CENTRAL AREA:

KENNETH BARRIER, Ickesburg, Pa.; Edward T. Donahue, 512 Palmer Ave., Patton, Pa.; Robert L. Kellock, Monroeton, Pa.; George F. Roberts, Sr., Box 125-J, R. D. #1, Johnstown, Pa.; Andrew Hegedus, Cassandra, Pa.

### EASTERN AREA:

CLAUDE L. JOHNSON, JR., 1021 Buckingham Way, Morrisville, Pa.; Raymond Koch, Weissport, Pa.; Kenneth H. Hill, South Broad St., East Bangor, Pa.; William G. Starner, Portland, Pa.; Paul C. Spangler, Route #2, Northampton, Pa.; John C. Eckert, Frost Hollow Rd., Easton, Pa.; Leo R. Rheiner, Sr., R. D. #2, Bethlehem, Pa.; C. Pearce Gray, Box 113, R. D. #2, Bath, Pa.; Willis H. Weidner, R. D. #2, Bethlehem, Pa.; Otto Gotzsche, R. D. #4, Easton, Pa.; Xavior Wernett, 405 Center Ave., Jim Thorpe, Pa.; Ralph McIntyre, Jr., Ruppletown Rd., Upper Black Eddy, Pa.; Francis J. Weiss, Easton Rd., Riegelsville, Pa.; Frank W. Degler, Stouchburg, Pa.; Donald C. Ermentrout, 19 W. 35th St., Reiffton, Reading, Pa.; Norman Werley, Centerport, Pa.

fect is certain. The new power we have in hand can affect the lives of generations still unborn. But beyond the fact itself there are many uncertainties. I have long felt and continue to believe that all possible assistance and encouragement should be given to all those geneticists upon whose competence we must depend for badly needed information about the genetic effects resulting from nuclear explosions.

In view of the new dimension of destructiveness that large thermonuclear bombs create, in view of the fact that their effects persist for years after their use against an enemy, what are the limits to their use in a large scale war?



## BARRETT TOWNSHIP

(Continued from page 3)

The body search was seriously hampered by the enormous jams of debris along the stream and because most areas were inaccessible except on foot.

Auxiliary police were immediately mobilized on the night of August 18th. These trained personnel were augmented by volunteer personnel as the situation demanded.

Police were used first for rescue work. After the flood waters had receded they were then used to help rescue and to transport the injured, and were used to direct and aid the body search details.

Traffic control was an immediate problem as was the guarding of the approaches of the washed-out bridges and as bridges were repaired and restored to service it was necessary to limit traffic over them to those actively working on the emergency. In many cases the repaired bridges were only able to carry a limited load; therefore, police were necessary to insure that heavily-loaded vehicles did not destroy the required structures.

As soon as the severity of the emergency was evident a First Aid Station was set up in the Barrett Township School and maintained throughout the emergency.

A total of 5987 typhoid shots were given to area residents. An alphabetical listing of all who received shots, the dates on which they received their shots, and the number of shots which they received was sent to the County Medical Officer and a permanent file record containing the same information has been retained for the permanent record of this office.

On the morning of August 19th steps were taken immediately to restore on an emergency basis the public facilities necessary for the community to operate until such time as the Utilities and Governmental Bodies involved were able to take over the job themselves.

Both public water companies were washed out and steps were taken to secure emergency pumping equipment, and the Fire Company was called to supply a pumper on a 24-hour basis to each of the Water Companies to provide water which could be used for any purpose except drinking, cooking, washing dishes, etc. These pumps were operated around the clock for approximately eight days.

Volunteer emergency crews were sent out to make temporary repairs to bridges and washouts on the main highway leading into the area.

## MEDICAL ASPECTS

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emergency units.

The State Council of Civil Defense became the immediate nerve center for relief work, and (following a meeting of Governor Leader's State Civil Defense and Disaster Committee) headquarters of State Health Department disaster operations were established in the offices of the State Council. It was Saturday evening.

A *modus operandi* had been effected. From advance headquarters in Easton, and from an even more advanced headquarters in hard-hit Stroudsburg, individual appeals for help could be filtered, interpreted and passed on (by radio, telephone, and teletype direct circuits), to Harrisburg for coordination and action.

By 8 a. m. on the 21st (Sunday) five additional, jointly-staffed, command posts were in operation (at Blakely, Stroudsburg, Bethlehem, Fairless Hills, and Milford). Each had representatives of the Departments of Health, Highways, Public Assistance, and Welfare, the Red Cross, and the State Council of Civil Defense. A senior officer of the Pennsylvania National Guard was in general administrative control of each of these vital outposts.

*The rescued had to be cared for. It would be days before many facilities would be anywhere near normal. Everything, it seemed, should be done at once. But reason and training dictated that efforts be channeled by priorities.*

The highest waters northeastern Pennsylvania had seen in 175 years had driven thousands from destroyed homes in a giant triangle stretching from Scranton to Easton to Milford, and idled 55,000 workers by damage to plants and business establishments.

Barest subsistence needs—clean water, food and shelter—were the immediate concern. Hospitals in the area were surveyed at once to make certain there were no continuing power failures.

Working with and through the Pennsylvania Civil Defense Organization for Public Water Works, State Health Department sanitary engineers and public water works officials made certain that public water supplies remained intact or were speedily restored to near-normal operation, using essential equipment from emergency stockpiles of the State Council of Civil Defense.

Flood waters undermined distributing mains for Scranton's water sup-

ply, causing them to break and plunging that third-largest Pennsylvania city into a five-day near-drought relieved only by emergency tank-truck deliveries of chlorinated water. But the great granite impounding reservoirs that normally supply Scranton stood firm, as did the big power dam holding back Lake Wallenpaupack, near Hawley. Downriver at Easton a scant six inches separated the lapping crest of contaminated flood waters from the top of the city's water filtration basins.

*Now the sun was shining. The waters had passed. This was the time when dangers potentially more deadly than the flood themselves—the soundless, unseen threats of disease and pestilence—would rise.*

There was scarcely a bureau or division in the State Department of Health that did not do its share to help protect the public health of those citizens of northeast Pennsylvania affected by this flood.

Eighty-one sanitarians of the Bureau of Sanitation were moved into the area where they exercised direction over the technical phases of private sewage disposal, private water supplies, disinfection of homes, restaurants and bakeries. They co-operated with the Department of Agriculture in disposal of spoiled meats, dead animals, spoiled food and contaminated beverages, and with sanitary engineers in insect and rodent control. The Bureau also supervised the movement by truck of ninety tons of chloride of lime for disinfecting and water purification purposes from the New Cumberland Army General Depot to main distribution points in the flood area.

Twenty men from the Bureau of Sanitary Engineering (some from as far away as Meadville) were directed to the flood area, with two regional sanitary engineers in charge.

Radio stations cooperated in broadcasting warnings against the use of water from wells and springs and newspapers reprinted the warnings. Boiling of water for human consumption was urged as a precautionary measure. Thousands of water samples were taken in the area as a check on water purity and as an indication of when the edict regarding boiling of water could be lifted. These samples were tested at State Department of Health laboratories in Wilkes-Barre and Philadelphia, staffs of which often

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## MEDICAL ASPECTS

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worked long past midnight to expedite reports on the samples.

A corps of 44 Public Health nurses, representing the Pennsylvania State Department of Health's Bureau of Public Health Nursing, working with little or no relief, aided doctors and others on their errands of mercy.

Biologicals and other items required for health purposes in the afflicted areas were dispatched by State Police car or helicopter (depending on circumstances), in answer to requests, through the efficient operation of the Division of Biologicals and Supplies.

To guard against any possibility of tetanus or typhoid fever, thousands of relief workers and others likely to have been exposed to grossly contaminated water or suffering traumatic injury received precautionary inoculations. Mass inoculation was not advised. Nevertheless, 88,000 cc's of triple typhoid vaccine were moved into the area for first-shot doses.

*With bulldozers, cranes, and steam-shovels utility crews and Army Engineers moved in to clear away major debris and restore normal transportation and communication facilities. With shovels, mops and scouring pads housewives and husbands commenced the labor of making muck-soaked homes once again habitable.*

Since public understanding of health-protection measures being taken (and public cooperation in carrying them out) were essential, public health educators found their services in demand. Explanatory bulletins with latest information and instructions (as for boiling water, use of lime, etc.) were issued to newspapers, radio and television stations. More than 30,000 State Department of Health leaflets on post-flood sanitation procedures and 1,500 copies of "What to Do Now About Emergency Sanitation at Home" (a Federal Civil Defense publication) were disseminated throughout the flood area.

The Bureau of Communicable Disease Control made on-the-spot investigations of reports (fortunately disproved) of disease outbreaks in the area. The Director of the Bureau of Statistics and Records, traveling by State Police patrol car, toured the area to meet with all county coroners to discuss identification and burial of flood victims. (A late compilation indicates 102 dead and three missing in Pennsylvania.)

The Secretary of Health, Dr. Mattison; the Director of Environmental

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Health Services; the Director of Preventive Services; the Director of Local Health Services; and the Director of the Bureau of Public Health Nursing, all made personal inspection trips to the damaged area.

The Bureau of Chronic Diseases, working with and through the State Pharmaceutical Association, succeeded in stopping indiscriminate dumping of flood-contaminated pills by unthinking persons where their bright colors were likely to attract the attention of youngsters who might have ingested them with harmful results.

Consultants from the Bureau of Nutrition were on the scene early. Emergency feeding stations were inspected; more than a week after the disaster struck 1,600 meals were still being served daily to homeless persons in Scranton, with a nutrition consultant supervising.

In all cases, Department personnel attempted to establish and maintain closest cooperation with local doctors, nurses, and other professional medical personnel. The Medical Society of the State of Pennsylvania, through its individual County Medical Societies in the flood-damaged counties, worked closely with State Department of Health representatives to assure that all needed medical facilities were available where and when needed.

The value of County Health Departments was proved again by the disaster. The Bucks County Health Department was active in providing first aid and in tetanus inoculations and measures against any danger of typhoid. County residents were warned of health hazards and instructed in health-protecting measures. The Butler County Health Department, although the length of the State away, volunteered its services.

Close relationships were maintained

with other Departments of the State Government also working on problems created by the flood. In particular, Department of Health and Department of Agriculture representatives, working together, supervised disposal of spoiled meats, dead animals, and contaminated foodstuffs, and impounding of canned and bottled beverages.

Federal agencies lent their assistance. The United States Public Health Service supplied an epidemiologist and an insect and rodent control specialist. The Corps of Engineers set up area headquarters and worked to help restore water works to normal operations (among other tasks). Federal Department of Agriculture representatives were on the scene. And, of course, the Federal Civil Defense Administration was lending all possible assistance, including a public health officer as a member of a task force assigned to Pennsylvania. DDT for aerial spraying was supplied from Federal sources.

Among the many organizations which, with individuals, volunteered in the health emergency should be mentioned six of the member companies of the Pennsylvania Motor Truck Association, each of which provided a trailer-truck for the shipment of lime. Also, the International Ladies Garment Workers Union placed a fully-equipped mobile medical center of its own at the disposal of State officials and this unit toured the flood area. Junior Chambers of Commerce aided in the rehabilitation work; more than 300 of their members helped in "mop-up" activities.

In review it is now apparent that this emergency, terrible though it was, did provide a test of disaster organization in Pennsylvania. One lesson learned was the need for more trained personnel.

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